

A. No 14
S E R M O N

PREACH'D AT THE
CATHEDRAL-CHURCH
O F

N O R W I C H,

On THURSDAY, Nov. 5. 1724.

ing the ANNIVERSARY of the Gun-
powder Plot; as also of the Happy
Arrival of His Late MAJESTY
King *WILLIAM*.

WILLIAM SUTTON, M. A.
and Vicar of SAXTHORPE in NORFOLK.

⊕
N O R W I C H:

Printed and Sold by *WILLIAM CHASE*,
Bookfeller in the *Cockey-Lane*.
M D C C X X V.

NORWICH,

*At a Court of Mayoralty held the 11th
Day of November, 1724.*

ORDERED,

THAT the 'Thanks of this Court be
given to the Reverend Mr. *Sutton* for
his Excellent Sermon Preach'd the 5th of
November Instant, being the Anniversary of
the **Gun-Powder-Plot**, and that he be de-
sired to Print the same; and that the Town
Clerk acquaint him therewith.

Per Curiam

LODGE



T O

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

JOHN CROSHOLD, Esq;

M A Y O R;

And to the rest of the

J U S T I C E S;

To the Worshipful the

Sheriffs and Aldermen

O F T H E

CITY of NORWICH,

T H I S

E R M O N

(Published at their Request)

Is Humbly DEDICATED by

Their Obligated Friend and Servant,

William Sutton



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PSALM L. 15. latter Part of that Verse.

— *I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*

WE are told in Scripture, *That Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of the Lord, doth Man*

ce.

A serious and weighty Truth, which Moses first inculcated to the Children of Israel, and afterwards the Blessed JESUS, the great Instructor of Mankind, thought fit to oppose against the Father of Lies, when he was tempted by him in the Wilderness. *Jesus himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*

To understand this the better, we must rise our Thoughts and Minds to a nobler Idea of Life, than what the Sons of Men usually entertain. To live in a Scripture Sense, not to draw in the Air and blow it out again, to Eat, and Drink, and Sleep, and Awake
B again,

2 *A S E R M O N* Preach'd at the

again, and to enjoy the Use of our Natural Senses: This is what the lower, the brutish part of the Creation take Pleasure in; They know no greater Bliss. But Man is of a higher Form, he is made in the Image and Likeness of God, and therefore his Life, and the Happiness of it, consists in the due frame and temper of his Mind Godward, in the Enjoyment of God and of himself. The Foundation of this Life, this Happiness is laid in the Holy Entercourse which God has all along vouchsafed to Mankind, to *Adam* and the *Patriarchs*, and the first Promulgers of his Law, by Dreams and Visions, by a Voice and Shechinah, or outward visible Appearance of the Divine Glory, to the succeeding Ages of the World; by his reveal'd Word and Will committed to Writing, the better to secure it (among other Conveniences) from the uncertain Issues of Tradition: The manifestation of his Word and Will is contain'd in the Books of the Old and New Testament, the Sacred Depositum of our Faith, which have been not without the wonderful Interposition of God's Providence, handed down throughout all the several Generations of Men, as a standing Testimony of the Divine Goodness and Love.

AMONGST all these, there is no one which seems more immediately adapted to the Service of Mankind than the Book of *Psalms*, of

'tis call'd in the Original Language, of *Hymns*, or Praises to the Lord, containing in a Treasure of Divine Instructions suited to all the Occasions of either the Church in general, or Private Persons in particular, in whatever State or Condition they may be, whether under the pressure of Afflictions, or ready to break forth into Thanksgiving and Praise, how they shall deport themselves in each, worthy of their Vocation of God in Christ Jesus.

THIS Fiftieth *Psalms* of which the Words of the Text are part, represent as it were an expostulation of God with the People of *Israel* for their misbecoming Thoughts and unworthy Apprehensions of him; imagining that he could be pleas'd with the outward Shell and Husk of Religion, their Sacrifices and Burnt-Offerings, whilst at the same time the Inward Purity and Sincerity of the Heart, and a regularity of Obedience consequent thereupon was wanting, which alone cou'd render the other of any Value or Esteem in his Sight. And to imprint this the deeper in the Minds of a slow and stiffnecked People, the Compiler of this Psalm (be it *David*, or *Asaph*, or some other Holy Man,) introduces Almighty God himself in Person, in great Majesty and Glory, coming as 'twere out of his Palace attended by his Ministers, with the Ensigns of Terror carried before him,

4 *A SERMON Preach'd at the*

and issuing out his Orders to Summon all his Subjects to appear at his Tribunal. The Description of all this is very pompous and magnificent, to be best learn'd indeed from the Words of the Psalm it self, which, even in our Translation, is truly Sublime, and commands our Attention. Give me leave, my Brethren, to repeat to you some of the most moving Parts of it, in that Version of it to which ye are most accustomed.

“ The Lord, even the most mighty God
“ hath spoken and called the World from
“ the rising up of the Sun unto the going down
“ thereof. Our God shall come and shall
“ not keep Silence, there shall go before him
“ a consuming Fire, and a mighty Tempest
“ shall be stirred up round about him. He
“ shall call the Heaven from above, and
“ the Earth, that he may judge his People.
“ Hear O my People and I will speak, I myself
“ will testify against thee O *Israel*, for
“ I am God, even thy God; I will not Re-
“ prove thee because of thy Sacrifices or for
“ thy burnt-Offerings because they were not
“ always before me: Thinkest thou that
“ I will eat Bull's-Flesh, and drink the Blood
“ of Goats. Offer unto God Thanksgiving
“ and pay thy Vows unto the most High
“ and call upon me in the time of Trouble
“ so I will hear thee. and thou shalt praise
“ me.” Thus speaks the oldest Translation

Cathedral-Church of NORWICH. §

I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me,
says the latter Version, but both in this Place
to the same Sense.

It appears then plainly from the Tenour
of this Psalm, what gave Occasion to the
Words of the Text, and what those Returns
are which the God and Father of all, both
Jews and Christians, requires for Mercies re-
ceived at his Hands; not Sacrifices and
Burnt-Offerings alone from the Jew, not the
solemn and customary coming into his House
of Worship alone from the Christians, but
such a frame and disposition of Mind and Spi-
rit accompanying these, as shall beget in us
due and worthy conceptions of his Love and
Goodness, and may be productive of such no-
ble Fruits of Esteem, and Reverence, and o-
bedient Service, as may redound to his Ho-
nour and Glory.

I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.

The Words are general, but my having
made choice of them for the subject of this
Day's Discourse, must, I dare say, already
have made most of my Hearers apply them
in particular. Indeed they appear plainly to
be this Day fulfilled in our Ears. *I will deli-*
ver thee ----- Here we may observe is the
Promise of the God of Truth made to his
People, and the Ground of our Assembling
together as this Day, evidently shows Us a-
mong others to be the People that this Pro-
mise

6 *A SERMON* Preach'd at the
mise hath been made good to. *Thou shalt
glorify me.* This shows us the Return which
God expects from those he has so vouchsafed
to deliver; and the Benefit we shall receive
from our assembling together as this Day will
rise in proportion to our Discharge of our
Duty in this particular, in glorifying him as
we ought; and my Joy also will be fulfilled
more or less in proportion to my being an
Instrument, however weak, to excite you
thereto.

As to the First of these then: The Deliverance which we are this Day assembled to commemorate, I presume there is hardly any one here present, whose Years and Discretion in other Matters entitle them to the Name of Man or Woman, but is well aware That we are here met together to offer up our Praises and Thanksgivings to the God of the whole Earth, not only for the manifold Mercies and Blessings we and our Fathers and all Mankind in general, have received at his Hands, but more especially so for that signal *One* which this auspicious Day has added to the Number.

And *That* indeed which first gave Occasion to the Celebration of the Day, was very signal and remarkable, and sufficiently manifested to us, *that if God had not been on our side, when Men, very wicked Men, however pretending to Piety and Devotion, and a Zeal*

for God's Glory; if God, I say, had not been
on our side when These rose up, or rather laid
in wait, against us, they had swallowed us up
quick when they were so wrathfully displea-
sed at us. To enter into all the particular
Circumstances of the Contrivance and Pro-
gression and happy Discovery of this Work
of Darkeness, is the Part rather of an Histo-
rian than a Preacher, and our Histories are
full enough in this Point to acquaint any
Person who shall consult them with the
whole Design, Intention and Defeat of that
wicked Conspiracy, and to excuse me from
any further Enlargement upon the Fact it
self. To Men of Letters and Reading the
whole Matter is sufficiently known, and to
others it may be, I think, enough to let them
know, as it is in the Words of the Prayer;
*That 'tis for the wonderful and mighty De-
liverance of our late Gracious King James
the First, the Queen, the Prince, and all the
Royal Family, with the Nobility, Clergy,
and Commons of the Realm then assembled
in Parliament, by Popish Treachery appoin-
ted, as Sheep, to the Slaughter, in a most
barbarous and savage manner, beyond the
Examples of former Ages: That 'tis, I say,
for the wonderful and mighty Deliverance of
all these, by the immediate Mercy and Pro-
vidence of God, that we are as this Day,
Year by Year, call'd upon to give Thanks
unto him, and come into his Courts with
Praise;*

8 *A SERMON Preach'd at the*

Praise. And this, I say, it is which at first gave Occasion to the Celebration of this Day, and to its setting apart to the more immediate Service of God. But however, this is not the only Mercy which we ought this Day to commemorate: The Multiplication of God's Favours to us in another Instance commands likewise our grateful Acknowledgment and our hearty Tribute of Praise; and that is, in His, as on this Day, bringing his Majesty who lately reigned over us, for the Deliverance of our Church and Nation from Popish Tyranny and Arbitrary Power.

And this is a Blessing which some perhaps amongst us are so far from being willing to own, that they are almost apt to think it happening on this very Day seems to take away from that due Regard they should otherwise pay to it; and the Preservation of King *James* the First on it, scarce make Atonement for the Rebellion, as they call it against, and Dethronement of King *James* the Second. With such Persons as these neither the Time, nor this Place, nor the Design of this Day, nor indeed my own Inclination, give me any Permission to enter into any Dispute about this Matter: All I shall say therefore further to it is this, That since we have already return'd Thanks to Almighty God for that Deliverance in our Prayers, and acknowledg'd it as such, (in which

is to be hoped all here present have been sincere) no Reason can be given, why the Consideration of it, together with the former Mercy, should not help and be a means to inflame yet more our Hearts with a true and becoming Sense of God's great Goodness to his our Church and Nation, and cause us to give Thanks unto the Lord; Us who have been thus a second time so signally redeemed of the Lord, whom he hath so providentially, almost miraculously delivered from the hands of the Enemy.

Now therefore since it has pleased this same God thus to be our Shield and our Deliverer, to change the Times and Seasons, himself still remaining Unchangeable, to bring Light out of Darkness, and to order all things sweetly; let us pay our Adorations now before him in this his House, in the Beauty of Holiness; let us at this time with all Contrition and Humility of Soul that becomes a Creature and a Sinner, acknowledge our own Vileness, our own Undeservings, and on this low Estate let us raise our Thoughts and Minds to the Contemplation of the Goodness and merciful Kindness of our Maker to all; not so much as we are particular Persons, but as we are the sinful People of this land.

AND here to the End that, as becomes me, may go before you in this Sacred Exercise,

10 *A SERMON Preach'd at the*
and lay down * a sure Foundation, whereon
you may build an Altar of Praise and Thank-
giving to the most High. Consider with me
I beseech you, a little more particularly the
Goodness and Mercies of God, as they have
visibly exemplified themselves to us of this
Church and Nation in the Preservation of
our true Religion and Liberties, from the
malicious Designs of our Enemies of the
Church of *Rome*.

AND here really when I meditate with my
self upon this Matter, methinks we seem to
be little less than the particular Charge, the
Segullab, the peculiar People of the Al-
mighty; *those* amongst whom he hath plea-
sed more especially to put his Name, to chuse
to himself as his own, and as the chief Fa-
vourites of Heaven.

So that we may with all becoming Humi-
lity, considering our own Undeservings, as-
sume to ourselves that saying which King
David spake of the *Jews*, that once happy
Nation, but now miserable Wanderers: *I*
hath not dealt so with any People, neither
have the Nations round about us received su-
ch eminent Tokens of his Favour.

AND to set this in a better Light, let me
beseech you to reflect on that vast Blessing
which our Church began then to enjoy, when
she shook off the blind Superstitions of the
Rome

Romish Faith, when the Veil was taken away which had for so many hundred Years hoodwink'd our Forefathers Eyes, and we began to see clearly, that the God who was to be the Object of our Adoration was not such an One as ourselves, stood not in need of the sensible representation of an Idol or Picture, made with Head, and Hands, and Eyes, to excite the Devotion of his Votaries, but was to be worshipped rather in Spirit and Truth, than with the pompous solemnity of Imagery and Show. Add to this, that another happy Privilege we are made Partakers of by being Members of the Reformed Church is this, That now with us the Holy Word of God, the Book of Life, is common in our Mother Tongue, and not forbid us, or lock'd up in a Language we understand not, but we may have a free Recourse thither for Doctrines and Examples, and whatever may be necessary for a Christian in his Warfare and Pilgrimage. The Priests Lips indeed should preserve Knowledge, and the People should seek the Law at their Mouth, but however 'tis necessary also that, like the Noble *Berens* of old, they should search the Scriptures, and see whether the things we speak be true or no, whether agreeable to the Word of God, or for the upholding any private secular End or Aim.

AND now who was it that thus brought Light out of Darknes, who established us

12 *A SERMON* preach'd at the
again in the true Profession of the Ancient
Primitive Christianity, who open'd our Eyes
to see that Mist of Ignorance, and Cloud of
Errors which the Church of *Rome* had super
induc'd upon our Faith; who? but *That God*
who not for any Deserts of ours, but purely
out of his own Mercy and Loving-Kindness
took Pity of us in our miserable Estate, and
set up the Light of his Truth in our Hearts

AND as he at first prepar'd the Minds of
his Chosen Ones among the *Gentiles* to re
ceive the glorious Truths of the Gospel, and
inspir'd 'em with an undaunted Courage and
Resolution to defend them, even to the
Loss of all that was dear unto them, their
Fortunes, and their Lives; so also did He in
the Infancy of the Reformation, when it had
to struggle with all the Powers of Men and
Devils, then did he raise up those who by
the Strength of their Reasoning, and by their
Courage even unto Death, sufficiently made
appear to the World, that they had a just
Value for the Cause for which they suffer'd,
and that it could not be Vanity or Osten
tation, neither a Love of Fame, nor a per
tinacious Obstinacy, but a true Zeal for the
Glory of God, and the Promoting of true
Religion, which made 'em despise and over
look the Comforts of Life, and embrace
Torments and Death with Complacency
and Joy.

My Brethren, let me freely speak unto you of those Blessed Martyrs who were the glory of the Times they liv'd in ; and who after the Confession of a brave Faith, fear'd not to seal the Reformation with their Blood. Of *Cranmer* and *Ridley*, *Taylor* and *Bilney*, and hardy *Bradford*, and others that might be named. Were you to look into their Writings, their Letters to their Friends, their Exhortations to their Fellow-Sufferers, their Apologies to their Enemies, and there see with what Warmth of Zeal, and Coolness of Thought, with what Meekness of Wisdom, and yet Strength of Argument, they there express the Sentiments of their Souls, it would raise your Admiration, it would fill your Minds with noble Ideas of the Men that suffer'd, and of the Cause they defended with so much Courage and Constancy. To observe these worthy Confessors when in Prison, writing to one another of their Graves they would of their Beds, and their going out of this World with the same Indifference and easy Composure of Mind, as they would their Travelling from one City to another. To see *Bilney*, our own Countryman, putting his Finger in the Candle day by day, that so he might prepare himself the better for that time when he was to be offered up a whole Burnt-Offering. To see the Venerable *Cranmer* with uncommon bravery commit that Hand unmov'd to the

Fire,

Fire, which had sign'd his Recantation; to see it burn, and hiss, and crackle there. But above all, to see the ever-memorable *Roger* Him to whom we owe the first Edition of our Bible in the *English* Tongue, Him who led the Way to Martyrdom in that cruel Reign; who fell the first Sacrifice; to see him so cheerfully lay aside those Bowels of Compassion which are so interwoven with human Nature, and put away from him his Wife and eleven Children, (one sucking at the Breast) whom the Bloody *Banner* had set before in his Way to Execution, as the last Effort to attack his Constancy; to see him I say, forego all these without any seeming Reluctancy, and march on triumphantly to embrace the devouring Flames. These, and these Things, the very setting them thus immediately before your Eyes, leave as it were no Spirit in you, they seem to overset your Minds, and fill you full of Wonder and Astonishment. And indeed it must be owned they seem to carry in 'em somewhat above the Pitch of human Nature, and force us to acknowledge of a Truth, that it is utterly impossible for mere Flesh and Blood so to divest it self of its natural Principles, to do and suffer what these Men did and suffer'd, unless God and his Divine Spirit had in a more especial manner supported them under, and carried them thro' these their Fiery Trials.

BUT in as much as that the Goodness of God is such that he will not permit his Servants for too long a time to groan under such tribulations and severe Sufferings, and had therefore promised of old, that *He would raise up Kings to be nursing Fathers, and Queens to be nursing Mothers of the Church*; so did he also in the Case before us, and by means of the long and prosperous Reign of his gracious Queen, who made the Increase of the true Religion her great Concern, it pleased him to establish it upon so firm a Basis, that all the Attempts of our Enemies, however open or secret, have not been since able to pluck it down, and set up again their false Doctrines and Novel Additions to the Faith. However, this we must say, they have not been wanting in their Endeavours so to do. And surely never had so bad a Cause such strenuous Patrons, never were the Consciences of any Men so vilely prostituted as those of the *Jesuits* have been in their Attempts to re-establish the Doctrines of the Church, shall I say, or rather the Court of *Rome*, in this our Land; and set up the Vicar of St *Peter* above all that is or can be call'd *Supreme* amongst us.

HENCE have sprung, from their Seminaries I mean, those damnable Doctrines of Mental Reservations, Absolutions from Oaths given, Deposing of Kings, nay taking away their

16 *A S E R M O N* preach'd at the
their Lives after what Manner soever, if
be they oppose the *Romish* Religion, and
are but the least Favourers of the Northern
Heresy. The Histories of *France* furnish
with Examples to these Rules, and the bar-
barous Murther of two of their Kings suffi-
ciently evince, that when such Principles are
once laid down as true and meritorious
'twill be an easy Matter to find those that
will put 'em in Practice.

BUT why go I so far as *France* for Exam-
ples of this Nature, the horrid Attempt of
this Day may evidence enough to the World
that there is no one Thing how barbarous
or cruel soever, which with these Men, for
the sake of Religion, may not be perpetra-
ted, which, when covered with that Veil
may not only pass for lawful, but praise-
worthy and glorious. O Blessed *Jesus*
that Men professing thy Gospel, and calling
themselves more particularly by thy sacred
Name, can so divest themselves of those
Bowels of Love, which are the peculiar
Badge of thy Discipline, nay of those very
Principles of human Nature, as in *cool Blood*
with the most *mature Consideration*, and deli-
berate Use of Thought to resolve on the hor-
rid Murder of such and so many Men, whose
only Crime it was to have different Sentiments
from themselves in Matters of Religion,
and to worship the true God after

manner which they call *Heresy* and
Schism. Surely these Men know not what
 manner of Spirit they are of; they little
 consider that Jesus the Author and Finisher
 of our Faith came not to destroy Mens Lives,
 but to save 'em; and that it is agreeable to
 the whole Tenor of Christianity to instruct
 those in Meekness that oppose themselves,
 to be mild, and gentle, and condescending to
 the Infirmities of Mankind, and not to be
 immediately calling from Heaven for Fire to
 destroy them, much less taking the Matter
 into our own Hand, setting up a Court of
 spiritual Judicature upon Earth, constituting
 our selves as Judges, and condemning all to
 Fire and Faggot who dissent from us; tho'
 doubtless they have better Reasons to de-
 fend their Perswasion with, than what rise
 from the Infallibility of the Pope, Anti-qui-
 ty, Visibilit y, and such like precarious Pre-
 tensions to Rule and Dominion, nay Oppres-
 sion and Tyranny over all other Churches
 upon Earth. And yet these are the Te-
 nets and Principles of the Church of *Rome*,
 to maintain which they have not stopt at
 the Subversion of whatever has been Civil
 or Sacred in whatever Kingdoms or publick
 Societies of Men they have had any the
 least Power or Ability so to do. To evince
 yet further the Truth of this, I need but ap-
 peal to the Memories and Judgments of se-
 veral here present, who cannot be so little
 D Strangers

Strangers to what pass'd in a late Reign (which the Assertors of the *Romish* Cause bore so great a Sway,) as not to be sensible how Matters were then carried; what and how great an Inroad there was then made upon the Liberties of the Subject both as to Civil and Sacred Rights, and with what Precipitancy every Action of those in Power tended to subvert the Reformed Religion and introduce that of the Church of Rome in its stead.

I wou'd, methinks, speak favourably of the Crown'd Head, of the Son of so good, and so unhappy a Father, and tread lightly upon the Ashes of the Dead; but yet I must be wanting to Truth it self, if I say not, that the Measures which were then concerted that Reign, had an apparent Tendency to destroy the Establishment, in which we now glory, both in Church and State; which too must in all Probability have had the desired Effect, if so be God himself had not interpos'd, and bless'd the Endeavours of our neighbouring Prince who came to our Rescue, and whose Arrival here, there are many Grounds to believe, was eagerly desired and earnestly expected, by a considerable Number of those, who afterward might appear dissatisfied with the Event.--- So variable, so fluctuating, so inconstant a thing is Man! But to the Honour and Praise of our ever great and glorious Name, God is

me, most perfect, unchangeable Being, the
 me Yesterday, to Day, and for ever: 'Tis
 he who, by the Hand of his Servant, has re-
 deem'd us again from the evil Machinations
 of our Enemy, an Enemy so much the more
 rag'd against us, by how much his other
 enterprizes had so often fail'd of their wish'd
 Success. Him therefore above all ought
 we to acknowledge as our mighty Delive-
 rer, who, as on this Day, has twice so sig-
 nally manifested his Divine Power on our
 behalf; and made it appear to the rest of
 the World, in how eminent a Degree this
 Church and Nation of ours is his immediate
 care and Concern; and how that, in spite of
 all the malicious Designs of evil Men, his
 Kingdom ruleth over all,

And thus, my Brethren, have I gone thro'
 the first Particular I propos'd to speak to,
 viz. To lay before you the Mercies and
 goodness of God, as they have visibly exem-
 plified themselves to us of this Church and
 Nation in the Preservation of our true Re-
 ligion and Liberties from the more secret
 and open Attempts of our Enemies of the
 Church of *Rome*, in which the Words of
 the Text are so truly verified, ---- *I will*
deliver thee--

GIVE me Leave therefore now to offer a
 Word or two of Exhortation in Relation to

26 *A SERMON preach'd at the*

the true Use we should make of this Goodness and Mercy of God thus exemplified to us, and how we should behave our selves to so beneficent a Being, who has thus manifestly concern'd himself in our Happiness and so frequently deliver'd us from the Hand of the Enemy;--- *Thou shalt glorify me.*

AND here in the first Place, in Order to glorify God as we ought, we must take care not to stop short upon the Consideration of second Causes; we must not be led to imagine that the Prudence, and Conduct, and Skill of Man alone, brought to pass the wonderful Things and Changes and Revolutions in Religion and Government, which have been seen in this our Nation since the first Dawn of the Blessed Reformation: No, no, we must lift up our Eyes still higher, and consider that 'tis God who sits at the Helm, that it is He who ruleth in the Kingdoms of the Earth, and putteth down one and setteth up another Prince in it, even as it seemeth good in his own Sight. 'Tis no less than to derogate from his Glory, if, in such momentous Affairs as concern Kingdoms, we ascribe *any thing* to Chance or Fortune, *much* to a lucky Accident, or prosperous Hit, or *very much* to a crafty Head or a valiant Hand; for tho' it becomes us not to reprove those whom God has been pleas'd to make his Instruments for the Good of Mankind,

their due Honour, yet let us give 'em no more than their Due, that is, the being Instruments; but let us attribute the whole Success of Matters to God alone; to Him that gives the Power, to Him alone be ascribed the Glory. For we have questionless the greatest Reason to believe, that He who numbereth the Hairs of our Head, and without whose Permission not so much as a Sparrow falleth to the Ground, is, and would be thought, more eminently distinguishable for his Watching over Kingdoms and Religious Sovereigns and States for their Good.

But then we must remember also, that Glory, and Praise, and Thanksgiving is not so commonly in the Mouth of Sinners; and that therefore in order to offer up an acceptable service of this kind, it behoveth us to purge our Consciences from all dead Works, and when indeed we may with all Humility make tender of our Thanksgivings, those Calves of our Lips: For not only the Prayer, but the Praise too of the Ungodly, is an Abomination to God. And whatever specious pretences of Holy Gratitude we may in publick seem to make unto him, yet without the inward purity of Heart, and a sincere Endeavour to walk in his Commandments blameless, 'twill be so far from being accepted of him, that 'twill be counted but Hypocrisy, and punished accordingly.

SECONDLY

SECONDLY. To promote still more effectually the Glory of God, let me recommend to you a studious Care of setting a just Value upon that pure and that reformed part of Christ's Holy Religion which is planted in this Land wherein we dwell, and which is professed in our Established Church, the Church of *England*; which however malign'd by the *Romanists* on one hand, and the *Separatists* on the other, yet has shown itself always able to maintain its own Cause and guarded by its own Primitive Truth fears not to be expos'd to View, but can bear the Test, and would be more admir'd were it better understood.

A Church, which, next under God, was not long ago the great Bulwark of the Protestant Cause, and defended it strenuously when the more cautious or less able Champions amongst the Dissenters of all sorts look'd either tamely on, or servilely crouch'd to those in Power; not to say, by their eagerly closing in with a Toleration insidiously offer'd, they help'd to weaken it. A Church, whose Doctrines are sound and primitive, and Ceremonies few and significant, which neither overcharges its Members with a Load of useless trifling Observances, nor yet leaves them to Liberty, which least it should degenerate into Superstition, becomes affectedly slovenly and irreverent. Lastly. A Church, which

seems to be contriv'd for the upholding of Monarchy, which gives no Countenance to Deposing or King-killing Principles, but teaches us to revere the Persons of Princes as sacred, to submit our selves, and not boldly to call in question their Actions, if perhaps they may not exactly square with our preconceived Opinions of things, but rather patiently endure, tho' we suffer wrongfully, than seditiously whisper a jealous Word against our Sovereign. This, this, my Beloved, is the true Doctrine of our H. Mother the Church; and this is her Glory and Crown, that she teaches her Sons as obediently to render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's, as unto God the things that are God's.

But Thirdly and Lastly, and to advance the Glory of God most effectually, let us ever bear in mind, That the many things which God has done for this our Church and Nation, That Series of Mercies and Deliverances which we have received at his Hands should stir up in us all an earnest Endeavour to behave our selves in such a manner, so to regulate the Moral Conduct of our Life, so to order our Conversation, every one of us in our respective Callings and Stations, as that God may not repent himself either of what he has done on our behalfs already, or what he may hereafter intend to do for our Good.

It is well known, or would be easy to make appear, that we enjoy the Light of the Gospel in a greater Purity than perhaps any part of the World besides; how much, think we doth it stand us in Hand to bring forth Fruit accordingly, least that our Punishment in the next World begin here, by our having our Candlestick remov'd, and by God's permitting us to be again enwrapp'd in the darkness of the Romish Church.

LET us call to mind the heavy Punishment which even to this Day awaits the Children of *Israel* for their despising the Goodness and lightly esteeming the Loving-kindness of their Maker. Let us think on the Seven Churches of *Asia*, once gloriously bright and famous for the Light of the Gospel and the Manifestation of Divine Truth, now scarce discoverable in their Ruins, but over run with Blindness and Mahometism. Let us remember too, that Civil and Sacred Societies of Men continue so no longer than in this World and that therefore in this World it is, that pleases God often to inflict upon them a severe Punishment for the Abuse of Mercies received. And then for a close of all, let every Person here present lay his Hand upon his Heart and say, whether or no he does not think the Iniquity of this Nation, amidst so much Light, and so much Knowledge, doth deserve a severe Punishment as a Nation.

Question

Questionless he must say it does, and that, were it not for the Lord's Mercies, we must have been consumed: But he is Long-suffering and Patient, willing that none should be Punished, but that all should come to Repentance.

Wherefore, my Beloved Brethren, upon the whole Matter, let us take good heed to make that true Use of these Attributes of God, his Patience and Long-suffering, which he in his loving kindness has all along design'd we should; let us endeavour what lieth in us to glorify him who has done such great things for us already, whereof we rejoyce, by giving the best Proof of it, the advancing a visible National Piety. Thus if we do, we may humbly hope he will still watch over us for our Good, and pour forth his Mercies upon this Church and Nation, by continuing to us our Religion pure and undefiled, by preserving to us the invaluable Life of our most Gracious Sovereign, and making his Posterity a Blessing to us, by giving him Wise and Upright Ministers, Loyal and Faithful Senators, and an Obedient Peaceable People. Thus shall we, as heretofore, be ever his Care and his Concern; He our God, and We his Chosen, and upon that account a Praise in the Earth. *Amen.*



